

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
100 MAPLE AVENUE  
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, October 5, 2016**

Present: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Dr. Dale Magee, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. John Samia; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Not present: Ms. Barb Malone, Director of Human Resources

The meeting was convened by Ms. Fryc at 7:06 pm.

**I. Public Participation**

Shrewsbury resident Bryan Moss addressed the committee regarding health and environmental concerns he has relative to artificial turf fields because of the potential for their installation as part of a proposed Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Athletic Campus Improvement Plan that would utilize private funding. Mr. Moss noted he was especially concerned about the potential use of crumb rubber infill in turf fields, and advised he hoped that Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) would look at alternative options, including organic management of natural recreational fields.

Ms. Fryc thanked Mr. Moss for his presentation. She noted that at present, no specific recommendations on materials for the project had been made, and that additional information would be presented at the School Committee meeting on October 19, 2016.

**II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports**

None.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer congratulated drama teacher, Jennifer Micarelli-Webb, and the cast and crew of last year's SHS fall play, *Picnic*, which won the prestigious Moss Hart award from the New England Theatre Conference.

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

##### **A. SHS Athletics: Student Presentation**

Mr. Jason Costa, Director of Athletics, Joan Laramee, Grade 12 Student-Athlete, and Matt Ward, Grade 12 Student-Athlete addressed the Committee on athletics at SHS. Ms. Laramee plays soccer, basketball, and track, and Mr. Ward plays hockey and lacrosse. They discussed the importance of their experiences as players and captains of multiple sports at SHS, and as Student Ambassadors for SHS at various leadership conferences.

In response to questions from the Committee, the students talked about how they motivated players when teams weren't doing as well, encouraged teamwork, and worked to successfully onboard younger players to their teams. Mr. Costa added that over the years he has seen very positive changes in the way upperclassmen welcome freshmen to the sports program at SHS, and Dr. Sawyer thanked the student-athletes for their thoughtful presentation.

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments**

##### **B. Athletics: Annual Report**

Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Principal, Shrewsbury High School, and Mr. Jason Costa, Director of Athletics, presented an annual report on 2015-16 Athletics to the Committee that included the purpose of interscholastic athletics, program highlights, unified sports, and data on athletic offerings and participation. Mr. Costa noted that a number of individual athletes achieved All-Star status, and several teams achieved various league Championships. Two athletes - Adam Twitchell and Brianne Moss - won SHS Colonial Awards for 2015-16 for being Outstanding Senior Athletes.

The Shrewsbury High School Boosters Association and Friends of Shrewsbury Crew were recognized for their support of SHS Athletics, as was Central One Federal Credit Union for being a \$20,000 MVP Level Sponsor. The Athletic Operations Budget for FY 15-16 included appropriated budget funding of \$219,831; athletic fee account funds of \$309,883; and gate receipts of \$43,940.

When discussing future considerations, Mr. Costa discussed the potential for making the Athletic Training position full time at SHS, and advised that Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) is looking to mandate this for 2017-18. In response to a question from the Committee about \$900 in expenses for doctor's fees, Mr. Costa advised that the presence of an EMT or Athletic Trainer is required at certain sporting events. He added that the advantage of using an Athletic Trainer is that they can both diagnose and treat student-athletes.

The Committee asked clarifying questions about the costs associated with specific sports, how goals were set for coaching positions, and if students had a voice in coaching evaluations. Mr.

Costa responded that students were informally involved in evaluations, and noted that team captains were also involved in the hiring process for coaches.

Dr. Sawyer thanked Mr. Bazydlo and Mr. Costa for a report that presented both a strong set of data and a thoughtful description of why interscholastic sports are so important.

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments**

##### **C. Concussion Statistics: Annual Report**

Ms. Noelle Freeman, Director of Nursing, and Mr. Walter Hildebrand, Athletic Trainer, presented an annual concussion report that included a definition of concussions, signs and symptoms, statistics by sport, concussion care, return to play protocol, and efforts relative to prevention and education. It was noted that in 2015-16 the fewest diagnosed concussions were reported in a five year period, and that this might be a result of enhanced prevention efforts around neck strength and core stabilization, especially in football, and because of the focus on educating athletes on measures like proper hitting techniques for contact sports.

Dr. Magee noted he was pleased with the contents of the report. Ms. Fryc and Dr. Sawyer both advised that they appreciated the proactive stance that SPS was taking towards education, prevention, and treatment of concussions, and Dr. Sawyer acknowledged that there also seems to be an increased awareness around concussions among families within the community.

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments**

##### **D. Nursing Services: Annual Report**

Ms. Noelle Freeman, Director of Nursing, provided her annual report on the breadth and scope of nursing services provided within the schools. The information included data on student and staff visits to the nurse, and different health and wellness initiatives at various grade levels. Ms. Freeman noted that teaching staff and administrators at all schools had completed anaphylaxis and Epipen training, that Epipens were now stocked in all health offices (as per recent School Committee policy, which gives parents the option to not send in an Epipen for their student), and that two doses of Narcan (naloxone) are also stored in each health office. Goals for the 2016-17 School Year include Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral To Treatment (SBIRT) Training, and a collaboration with the National Art Honor Society at SHS to create coloring books for students who are struggling with anxiety.

In response to questioning from the Committee, Ms. Freeman advised that it is unclear at the present time as to what would happen if and when a student concern regarding potential drug abuse was raised through the SBIRT screening, and Mr. Patrick Collins advised that SPS currently has two students enrolled at Recovery High School. Dr. Sawyer thanked Ms. Freeman for the report, and the entire Nursing Staff for the important work they do every day to assist

students and SPS staff. He also recognized the help provided earlier in the day by Paton School nurse Lisa Smith, who assisted at an automobile accident near Walter J. Paton School.

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

##### **E. Rep. Hannah Kane: Legislative Update**

Representative Hannah Kane noted that she has three children in SPS who all had a great start to the school year, and thanked the school nurses in attendance at the meeting for their care of one of her children that has two medical issues. Rep. Kane noted a number of school-related groups that she is affiliated with, and advised that she looked forward to local students coming forward to volunteer at the Massachusetts State House.

Regarding the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget, Rep. Kane noted that tax revenue coming in was down from what was anticipated - approximately \$11,000,000 down in the first quarter - but noted it was Governor Charlie Baker's intention to not touch Local Aid or Education Funding if possible. Rep. Kane added that increased funding was appropriated in Per Pupil Spending - \$55 per pupil, which represented approximately \$330,000 for Shrewsbury - which helped offset losses from the elimination of Kindergarten Expansion Grants. Rep. Kane advised that Special Education Circuit Breaker would be fully funded at the 75% level, and she thanked Dr. Sawyer for meeting with her and the MA Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee before the budget was finalized to discuss the challenges to districts around the costs associated with out of district placements.

Rep. Kane also discussed the status of the Unfunded Mandate Task Force and the Foundation Budget Review Commission, dramatic increases in health insurance and Special Education costs, McKinney-Vento Act transportation costs, the Financial Literacy Task Force, the Food Policy Council, the loss of Full Day Kindergarten Grants, and the SBIRT program. Rep. Kane went on to talk in depth about the reasons for her opposition to MA Ballot Question 4, which would legalize recreational marijuana, which she described as an implementation question, versus a philosophical question. Dr. Magee thanked Rep. Kane for the information and advised he would like to see Question 4 addressed at the School Committee meeting on October 19, 2016.

Ms. Fryc asked Rep. Kane for her position on MA Ballot Question 2, which would lift the existing cap on Charter Schools in Massachusetts. Ms. Kane advised that she was not philosophically opposed to Charter Schools, but did take issue with the fact that as written it would allow children who were not in underperforming districts to opt into Charter Schools. Dr. Sawyer agreed with Rep. Kane's concern regarding underperforming districts, and thanked her for her report and her work on behalf of Shrewsbury Public Schools.

#### **V. Curriculum**

None.

## **VI. Policy**

### **A. Charter School State Ballot Question: Vote on Position**

On November 8, the voters of the Commonwealth will decide whether to approve a citizens' petition which would enable the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to approve up to 12 additional so-called Commonwealth Charter Schools per year, beyond the limitations that are currently in effect, and Dr. Sawyer had previously recommended that the School Committee take a formal position in opposition to this ballot question through a vote at this meeting. Committee members provided their thoughts in turn, and there was consensus that while all agreed that parents should have choices regarding their student's education, the ballot question did not address funding adequately and would put SPS at risk financially. Dr. Sawyer added that there might be a misperception brought on by recent media adds that indicate that there is no financial impact to public schools by charter schools because their budgets increased by the same percentage. He noted that it was important to realize that money lost to charter schools must be backfilled by other sources and noted that the recent override in Shrewsbury would have had greater impact if almost \$1,000,000 per year in funds had not been moved to charter schools. In addition, and following the above line of reasoning, if charter schools do not have a negative fiscal impact on public schools, then public schools would have no incentive to innovate, which runs counter to the argument that competition brought on by charter schools should incent public schools to innovate. Dr. Sawyer added that he continued to recommend that the Committee vote to oppose Question 2.

On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Dr. Magee, the Committee voted unanimously to support a resolution stating:

*The Shrewsbury School Committee formally opposes Massachusetts Ballot Question 2, because the expansion of charter schools without changes to the way charter schools are funded will cause traditional public school districts to be negatively impacted by an increased loss of funds, putting the adequate funding of the Shrewsbury Public Schools at significant risk. The School Committee authorizes the Chair of the Committee to communicate the Committee's position on Question 2 through means such as letters to the editor, in order to convey to the citizens of Shrewsbury why the School Committee strongly recommends that a "No" vote on Question 2 is in the best interests of the Town of Shrewsbury and its public schools.*

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Fiscal Year 2018: Review Draft of Fiscal Priorities & Guidelines**

Mr. Collins presented a draft of fiscal priorities and guidelines for Fiscal Year 2018 that addressed priorities which included sustaining improvements in class size; continued investment

in materials, personnel, and technology; and investments in district-based programming and resources to be able to educate more special education students within the district. The report listed assumptions about the FY 2018 budget, and offered guidance around the District's four Strategic Priorities. Mr. Collins noted that a vote on the 2018 Fiscal Priorities & Guidelines is recommended for the October 19, 2016 School Committee meeting. Mr. Samia noted that Assumption #7 was the only one to change, that the proposed document sets the table for FY 2018 budgeting and provides a similar format to previous years, and welcomed public feedback. Dr. Sawyer thanked Mr. Collins for his work on the document, and also acknowledged the assistance of Mr. Samia and Dr. Magee who consulted on the draft as members of the Subcommittee on Fiscal Projections.

### **VIII. Old Business**

None.

### **IX. New Business**

None.

### **X. Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on September 19, 2016.

### **XI. Executive Session**

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss a student residency issue. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, on a roll call vote: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes, the Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 10:07 pm.

### **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. 2016 Annual Athletics Report
2. FY 2018 Budget Development & Priorities Guidelines Draft
3. 2015-2016 Annual Concussion Report
4. 2015-2016 Annual Nursing Report
5. Department of Nursing Presentation Slides
6. Concussion Presentation Slides
7. Athletics Presentation Slides